

Teaching Experience
at the
Professorship for Adult and Continuing
Education
Institut für Pädagogik
Julius-Maximilians Universität, Würzburg
Germany

A Report

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Contents

	Page no.
1. Introduction	3
2. The Seminar (Course): Transformation through Flexible Learning System- An Indian Experience	3
3. Public lectures	5
4. Video lectures	5
5. Other academic activities	6

1. Introduction

The **Julius-Maximilians-Universität, Würzburg** is one of the oldest universities of Germany and its establishment dates back to 1402. The University has a rich history of academic research and the distinction of 14 Nobel Laureates having done research here. The University has a **Professorship for Adult and Continuing Education in Institut für Pädagogik (Institute for Education)** which offers graduate, post graduate and Ph.D programmes.

In the recent past, the Institute for Education under the dynamic leadership of Prof. Dr. Regina Egetenmeyer, Director has been actively associating with educational institutions in India to promote internationalism in adult education. Many of the programmes are supported under the DAAD.

In Dec 2017, the Professorship of the Institute for Education invited Prof. Vandana Chakrabarti, Director, Lifelong Learning and Extension, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai and Dr. Anita Priyadarshini, Associate Professor, STRIDE, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi to teach a Seminar (Course) for its Post Graduate students.

This Report highlights the teaching experiences of Prof. Vandana Chakrabarti and Dr. Anita Priyadarshini during this Visiting Professorship at JM University.

2. The Seminar(Course): Transformation through Flexible Learning System- An Indian Experience

Prof. Vandana Chakrabarti and Dr. Anita Priyadarshini designed, developed and taught a course entitled '**Transformation through Flexible Learning System - An Indian Experience**'. This topic of the Seminar was decided after a great deal of discussion, study and reflection by the Visiting Professors. The course was also aimed at fulfilling the request of Prof. Regina who desired that post graduate students should have an exposure to philosophies and movements of adult education in other countries. It was felt that the students of the Institute would benefit from the rich experiences of India in the areas of adult education and flexible learning. The seminar was jointly conducted for students of the Masters' level of the Institut für Pädagogik, J.M.University, Würzburg. The total duration of the seminar was 30 hours and was conducted between December 2 to 22, 2017 at the Bibliotheks-und Seminarzentrum, Room 00.212 (Seminar Room, Room 212), University of Würzburg.

2.1 Aim of the Seminar

This seminar (course) aimed at introducing learners to the flexible learning system established in India and highlighted the social and individual transformation that occurred due to this system of learning. The context of the Seminar was the literacy movement and the open and distance learning systems, both of which promote further learning for adults as a means of lifelong learning.

2.2 Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes were as follows:

- To contextualize lifelong learning as a means of transforming and empowering individuals, communities and societies in the Indian situation.
- To examine the theoretical perspective of adult learning and the impact of learning theories on the transformation of adult learners.

- To trace the development of flexible inclusive learning pathways for parity with formal education systems.
- To analyse development and role of teaching-learning materials in bringing about transformation through flexible learning systems (from literacy to higher education level).
- To review the social transformation as an outcome of flexible learning systems.

2.3 Pre-Seminar Preparation

The Seminar was very well planned by the University. It was required that various academic content be uploaded on the university's website prior to the commencement of the Seminar. This would allow students to choose their topics and then come prepared for the seminar.

In keeping with the learning objectives, the visiting professors designed the curriculum, prepared the reading list, identified the films to be viewed by the participants, designed the participatory activities, prepared the slides and other teaching material, and translated adult literacy material available in local Indian languages into English for use during the sessions. A lot of library work and collection of exemplar material was done by the Visiting Professors so that the interest of the learners would be generated.

2.4 Seminar Curriculum

The curriculum for the seminar on '***Transformation through Flexible Learning System - An Indian Experience***' was designed keeping the Indian context in mind and the following topics were taught:

Sl. No.	Topic
1.	Contextualizing lifelong learning in Indian situation
2.	Adult Learning - Theoretical considerations
3.	Identification of learner needs and interests through participatory methods
4.	Designing the literacy curriculum
5.	Transformative content of learning material for basic literacy
6.	Flexible learning systems – Concept of Open Distance Learning institutions at school and higher education level in India
7.	Equivalency Programmes – An alternate learning pathway for adults
8.	Role and development of self-learning materials in flexible learning systems
9.	Improved access to community resources and democratic spaces
10.	Social transformation through education and its impact on gender relations

2.5 Teaching-Learning and Evaluation

The students in the seminar included not just those from Germany but also students from Nigeria and Serbia who were on an exchange programme. This made the class truly international. Some of the students were employed and after class they proceeded to their work places. The environment was very academic with a dedicated group of young people who were pursuing adult education. The importance paid to library visits and museum visits as a means for further learning was noteworthy.

An interactive teaching-learning methodology was used which included presentations by the Visiting Professors followed by discussion. The learners were exposed to literacy material from different states in India. During the sessions, learners reviewed literacy primers and then individual students made presentations expressing their viewpoint. The film clips made by National Literacy Mission were also viewed and followed by reflection, group discussion and presentation of group reports.

The interaction in the class was intense and level of reflection and discussion was high. Many a times, students from Serbia and Nigeria shared experiences from their countries. Since Germany has a high literacy rate, the German students were eager to know more about the literacy programmes for adults. They expressed concerns faced by some sections of people especially related to functional literacy. The Nigerian students also inquired about the issue of multiple languages spoken in India and how the transaction of education was conducted in so many Indian languages. The students were also interested to understand the functioning of flexible Open Distance Learning system and the teaching learning methodology for engaging such large numbers of students in Open Universities.

The students showed deep interest in understanding the Indian adult education programmes and the nature of questions raised by them indicated that their interest was greatly aroused on issues related to transformation that had occurred due to the flexibilities in the system.

It was interesting to note that the University followed a practice which gave freedom to students to take on additional academic work for additional credits. Accordingly two students expressed their desire to write an essay. The essay was submitted by the students and evaluated by the visiting professors as per the guidelines of the University.

3. Public Lectures

The Professorship for Adult and Continuing Education of Institut fur Pädagogik at the JM University also invited the two Visiting Professors to deliver Public Lectures in the Winter Semester 2017/18. These public lectures were meant for students of all courses. The Public Lectures were given wide publicity with well-designed posters made by the team at the Institut fur Pädagogik being put up across the University.

The following public lectures were delivered:

Name of the visiting professor	Topic	Date and time
Prof. VandanaChakrabarti, Director, Lifelong Learning and Extension, SNTD Women's University, Mumbai and Dr. Anita Priyadarshini, Associate Professor, STRIDE, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi	Skill development for adults: Indian experience	Monday, December 18, 2017 02:15-03:45pm
Prof. VandanaChakrabarti, Director, Lifelong Learning and Extension, SNTD Women's University, Mumbai	Lifelong Learning in India	Tuesday, December 19, 2017 10:00 -11:30am
Dr. Anita Priyadarshini, Associate Professor, STRIDE, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi	Open and Distance Learning System in India	Thursday, December 21, 2017 10:00 -11:30am

4. Video Lectures

During this visiting professorship, Prof. Regina Egetenmeyer, Director, Institut fur Pädagogik requested the Professors to conduct video lectures on topics which could be used during tutorials for students of lifelong learning. Both the professors readily agreed to undertake this exercise of recording at the university's studios.

The details of lectures that were video recorded are given below:

Name of the visiting professor	Topic
Prof. VandanaChakrabarti, Director, Lifelong Learning and Extension, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai	Lifelong Learning in India
Dr. Anita Priyadarshini, Associate Professor, STRIDE, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi	Open Distance Learning

The entire exercise of recording was carried out in a systematic manner in the well- laid out recording studio. The highly cooperative staff made recording of the videos in such a short time a pleasant experience.

5. Other Academic Activities

In addition to the seminar and other academic activities at the J.M. University, Wurzburg, the visiting professors visited with premier academic institutions in Germany and Denmark. They also interacted with eminent personalities in the field of adult education such as Dr. Arne Carlson, former Director UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning, Hamburg. During the visit to Denmark, visiting professors held discussions with Professor Soren Ehler of **Aarhus University** and Ms. Shalini Singh, Guest Researcher, Department of Science Education, Aarhus University

In order to better understand the philosophy of Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783 -1872), the philosopher behind the concept of Folk Schools, it was decided to visit a Danish Folk School. The Aarhus University arranged this visit and Ms. Shalini Singh and Prof. Jonas Andreasen Lysgaard accompanied the Visiting Professors to **Folk High School** at Krogerup near Copenhagen. During this visit the visiting professors were exposed to the philosophy and various activities of the Folk High School by Ms. Sigrid Lauenborg Dahl, a teacher of Global Studies and Activism at the Folk High School. They met the Head master of the school Ms. Rikke Forchhammer and interacted with teachers and students of the Folk High School. It was interesting to speak to students from Pakistan, Japan, Korea, Maldives and Germany who were pursuing courses at this Folk School. No doubt that these Folk Schools have made a significant contribution to the education system of the country.

Another important activity was the visit to **UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning (UIL), Hamburg** facilitated by Ms. Rika Yorozu. The Visiting Professors made a presentation on '*Saakshar Bharat*' followed by a discussion that was attended by Dr. Madhu Singh and programme specialists in UIL. A special meeting was held with the UIL Director, Dr. Kabir Sheikh. The visiting professors visited the UIL library and viewed the facilities for country-wise documentation of Lifelong Learning programme.

In Hamburg, the visiting professors also visited the **Helmut-Schmidt-Universitat**, where upon the invitation of Prof. Dr. Sabine Schmidt-Lauff, a presentation was made on 'Fields of Lifelong Learning in India'. This University is unique as its students are soldiers who are enrolled for further studies.

During their visit, the visiting professors also got an opportunity to absorb the local culture as well as visit a few places of historical significance such as the Residence Palace, Fortress and Christmas market in Wurzburg. A visit to the historical city of Nuremburg was fascinating. Museums were also visited.

Prof. Dr. Regina Egtenmeyer's enthusiasm, academic commitment and importance that she attaches to internationalisation of her programme is exemplary. Her vision for the Institute is impressive and it was due to her dynamism that so many activities are being carried out by the Institute. Prof. Dr. Regina has prepared a strong team of staff, young scholars and student assistants who are dedicated

to their responsibilities. It was a pleasure interacting with all of them. The preparations for this visit were ably handled by Ms. Clara Kuhlen, who ensured that all academic planning and arrangements were of a high order. The team of Ms. Jutta Ruttger, Ms. Jenny Fehrenbache, Ms. Helen Sayegh, Ms. Johanna Raphael, Ms. Katrin Bergmann, worked in close coordination to make this an extremely meaningful and professionally successful visit for both the visiting professors.

At the end, the Visiting Professors would like to thank Prof. Regina Egetenmeyer, Director, Institut für Pädagogik and the authorities at the J.M. University, Würzburg for a very fulfilling academic engagement with staff and students. We hope that a more long term and sustainable academic relationship emerges in the interest of quality education in the area of Lifelong learning.